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MEMORIAL

OF THE

MERCHANTS AND OTHER CITIZENS

OF

RICHMOND AND ITS VICINITY,

AGAINST

An increase of the Tariff of Import Duties, a discontinuance of credits on Revenue Bonds, the abolition of Drawbacks, and other restrictions on Commerce.

NOVEMBER 24, 1820.

Referred to the Committee on Manufactures.

WASHINGTON:

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1820.

MEMORIAL.

TO THE HONORABLE THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED:

The undersigned memorialists, inhabitants of the city of Richmond,
and its vicinity, in the state of Virginia, beg leave

Respectfully to represent:

Whereas, at the last session of Congress, a bill passed through the House of Representatives, in favor of an augmentation of import duties, avowedly for the purpose of favoring and protecting internal manufactures; and whereas the manufacturers, encouraged in their expectations by the very favorable reception their memorials have hitherto met with, are preparing anew, with combined efforts, to lay the subject before the next session of Congress, notwithstanding that it appears to be the general opinion of much the greater part of the nation, that the present rates of import duties are as high as a prudent regard to the best interests of the United States will warrant, whether considered with regard to revenue or with regard to the ability of the consumers to pay for the articles thus made subject to duty:

Your memorialists consider it incumbent on them to suggest such arguments, and to recommend such measures, as they may think best calculated to arrest the further progress of a measure believed to be fatal to the best interests of this section of the Union, and hostile to the general interests of every part thereof.

Your memorialists have been encouraged to enter into an examination of the subject, from a belief, that, when the House of Representatives passed the bill referred to, a majority of those who voted in favor thereof did so from an ex parte representation of the subject, and under the influence of a patriotic, but mistaken, zeal to promote the interests of a class of men to whom they believed the nation to be greatly indebted. The ardor of the moment having now, however, passed away, it may be hoped the subject will yet be fairly examined, and that a just decision will ensue.

It is held to be an incontrovertible axiom, "that the greatest degree of happiness is communicated to the greatest extent of population, by growing what the territory of a country can grow most cheaply, and by receiving from other countries what it cannot produce but at too great an expense."

It is almost equally true, that, to interfere with any of the different branches of human industry, by protecting one, or more, at the ex-

pense of the rest, will be productive of evil; and that such interference, on the part of a republican government like ours, which guarantees to every man the liberty of pursuing such occupation as to him may seem best, provided he does no injury to the rights of others, must be fraught with manifest injustice.

On these principles, therefore, it would seem, that, except for the sake of revenue, and to guard against too great a dependence on other countries for absolute necessities, which, in times of *war especially*, might be severely felt, a wise government will not interfere with, or pretend to direct, the industry of her citizens, by any partial favor or particular taxation.

The amount of revenue necessary to be raised will be sought for, therefore, *in the first place*, by taxes or duties on articles of luxury, or such as, by a too free use thereof, prove injurious to the health and morals of a people; and in the next place, should these sources fail to produce a sufficient amount, by taxes or duties on articles which contribute to comfort; and *lastly*, on those of the first necessity, having due regard to the consideration of making all taxes bear as equally on the community as possible; (those paid in luxuries being considered to be paid voluntarily, because a man need not incur them unless he chuses.)

By a wise government, no prohibitory duties will be laid, nor will any so heavy be imposed as absolutely to exclude goods of foreign growth or manufacture, lest, thereby, the great body of the people become, for a while, a prey to a few interested individuals, or smuggling be introduced, greatly to the injury of morality and of the fair trader, (whether importer or manufacturer,) who is thus exposed to an unequal competition, against such as pay neither regard to the interest of their fellow-citizens, nor to the sanctity of an oath.

Passing by numerous arguments which might be urged on general principles, against heavy or excessive duties, let us examine the policy of increasing the rates of duty now existing, for the sake of affording more adequate protection to internal manufactures.

In this examination we are naturally led to inquire, what are the manufactures thus calling for protection, and what are their claims?

In a country such as ours, but recently settled, and thinly populated, in comparison with many parts of Europe and Asia, while we have still large tracts of fertile land to clear, capable of producing all the comforts and necessities of life, and of affording the most natural, as well as the most healthy employment to man, it would seem as if we ought, as yet, to encourage only the manufacturing of such articles as are the production of our own soil; and that it ought not to be our study, unless for the purpose of turning our industry to the best account, and of procuring the means of defence, to foster manufacturers to any degree beyond this; lest we thereby introduce the disorders now prevailing in Europe, and demanding *at this time, in England more especially*, the watchful care of government, to prevent them from breaking out into insurrection and open rebellion.

Assuming it, therefore, that it is not the true policy of the United States to encourage any manufactures, except of the productions of

their own soil, let us next inquire how such manufactures are already protected.

In the foremost rank we place manufactures of *cotton*. On all articles of which cotton is the chief material, we find a duty already laid (at the lowest rate) of twenty-five per cent. ad valorem, and that the lowest kind of piece goods shall be valued for duty at twenty five cents per square yard; which valuation so far enhances the duty, as in many instances to make it actually more than fifty per cent. ad valorem, which has already, in effect, served as a prohibition against most of the cotton goods from India, and many of the lowest fabrics of cotton goods from Europe. This will very plainly appear, when to this duty we add the enhanced price the European manufacturer pays for the raw material, above what the manufacturer in the United States may procure it at, which may be estimated at an average of at least six cents per pound, for freight, insurance, and charges to England, with duty and commission there.

The cotton manufactures within the United States are, therefore, already protected by twenty-five per cent. difference in the cost of the raw material, by the European manufacturer's profit, which, it is presumed, may be fairly rated at twelve and a half per cent. more, by the charges on importation, say for packages, insurances, commissions, and freight, commonly rated at ten per cent. by the duty of twenty five per cent. on importation; and, lastly, by the importing merchant's profit, which, it is presumed, may be rated at ten per cent. also.

Let us examine what all this will amount to.

Suppose there is laid out in the United States, for cotton and wool - - - - - \$ 1,000

To which add the following items:

For freight and charges to England, including the duty there, rated at twenty-five per cent.	250
For supposed expense of manufacturing	1,000
For manufacturer's profit, rated at $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the amount expended	281 25
For charges of importation from England to America, rated at 10 per cent.	253
For duty on importation, 25 per cent.	696 09
For importer's profit, rated at 10 per cent. on the aggregate	348 04

Thus exhibiting an aggregate of - - - - - \$ 3,328 50
from the sales of \$1,000 laid out in America for cotton wool.

Now suppose the American manufacturer also lays out in cotton wool - - - - - \$ 1,000

And he also expends in the manufacturing thereof 1,000

And that he shall have to pay to an agent for the sale of his goods, a commission of five per cent.

on a similar aggregate of \$ 3,328 50 - 191 42

There will remain to the American manufacturer

a nett profit of - - - - - 1,637 08

----- 3,828 50

By this simple statement it appears, that the American manufacturer's profit is nearly six times as great as that of the foreign manufacturer, without taking the interest of money into account, which would also operate in his favor, on account of the time consumed in carrying the raw material to Europe, and bringing back the manufactures thereof, on assuming that he possesses the same skill, and can get the goods manufactured at the same expense; but, granting that he does not possess the same skill, and that on this account it will cost him fifty per cent, that is five hundred dollars more, to have his goods manufactured, his profit will be still four times as great as that of the European manufacturer.

Can the American cotton manufacturer ask for more? Is he not already sufficiently protected? Can it be the interest of the nation to foster these manufactures at so high a price? Does it not rather appear, that the duties on importation of these articles should be lowered or altogether abolished, that the consumers might be able to obtain them on fair terms? It is believed that this is proved unanswerably, and that no reason now exists for the impost on cotton goods being fixed at so high a rate as it now stands, *but for the sake of revenue*, though it may fairly be questioned whether a duty of fifteen per cent. would not produce as much, as the rate of twenty-five now fixed; as it is certain that the rate of duty now existing excludes a great many of the coarser fabrics, and it is presumed that it induces to the smuggling of the finer goods.

On this branch of the subject, your memorialists have thought proper to dwell the more minutely, because the observations thereon will apply to many other subjects of our manufactures; indeed, to all which are made from materials of American growth.

Let us proceed to an examination how the manufactures of *wool* are protected.

As we scarcely raise as yet as much wool as may be requisite for our own use, we shall not regard it as an article of export, and therefore the manufactures thereof will present themselves to our view as less abundantly protected than manufactures of cotton; but it is presumed, the following statement will show, that at least adequate protection and encouragement is also afforded under the present tariff to the woollen manufacturers within the United States.

Suppose the foreign woollen manufacturer lays out in wool	\$1,000
And expends for the manufacture thereof	1,000
To which add the manufacturer's profit, rated at 12½ per cent.	250

Add also the following items:

For charges of importation to America, 10 per cent.	225
Duty on importation, 25 per cent.	618 75
Importer's profit, rated at 10 per cent.	309 37

Thus exhibiting an aggregate of - - - - \$3,403 12
from the sales of one thousand dollars laid out for *wool*.

Now suppose the American manufacturer also lays out		
in wool, - - - - -	\$1,000	
And that he also expends in the manufac-		
turing thereof - - - - -	1,000	
And that he shall have to pay to an agent		
for the sale of his goods a commission		
of 5 per cent. on a similar aggregate		
of \$3,403 12 - - - - -	170 16	
<i>There will remain to the manufacturer</i>		
<i>within the United States a nett profit of</i>	<u>1,232 96</u>	<u>\$ 3,403 12</u>

Or upwards of sixty per cent. on the whole amount expended: and, after admitting, from want of possessing the same skill, and machinery, and on account of labor being in this country perhaps dearer also, the American manufacturer may be subjected to an extra expense of fifty per cent. for manufacturing, there will still remain to him a nett profit of nearly thirty per cent. on the whole amount expended. But it will be said, that certain articles of woollen manufacture pay only fifteen per cent. duty, viz. blankets, rugs, worsted and stuff goods: to which it may be answered, that it was deemed impolitic to charge these goods with a higher rate of duty, on account of their being of general necessity; and it may moreover be urged, that on account of their bulk, &c. the freight and expenses on importation of these goods will considerably exceed the ten per cent. charged for that purpose, and that the foreign manufacturer must, in most cases, also pay a commission for the sale of his goods, as well as the manufacturer here, though it was left out in the preceding estimates, that no questionable charge might be brought forward.

It is conceived unnecessary to proceed farther by way of example to show, how all our different manufactures are already protected and encouraged, under the existing tariff, as nearly all of them may be ranged under one or the other of the examples already stated; but your memorialists, avowing themselves the friends of internal manufactures, as a means of promoting national industry and security, and therefore, conceiving that they ought to be fostered as far as they can be without injury to other branches of industry, would most gladly suggest any thing which might conduce to that end, without being highly injurious to the revenue, destructive to the interests of commerce, and oppressive on the great body of the people. In this view, therefore, they respectfully suggest, that all articles now subject to a duty of seven and a half per cent. may be made subject to a duty of twelve and a half or fifteen per cent., under the impression, that this difference in the duty will make little or no difference in the consumption; that these articles being for the most part such as may justly be ranked amongst articles of luxury, will bear an addition of taxation, without being felt by the great body of the people; and that, while the impost does not exceed twelve and a half to fifteen per cent. smuggling is not much to be apprehended: as, though the smuggler will not be restrained by his principles from the practice thereof, yet

a due regard to his interest will operate to restrain him; and in this view it is to be observed, that the smuggler must incur greater expenses, in bringing his goods to market, than the fair trader, as he is obliged to conceal his operations, and he must also sell at reduced rates, to get them quickly off his hands, to escape detection. If, therefore, ten per cent. is allowed to cover these items, (and it is believed it will require that proportion at least to do so,) the remainder will not be sufficient to induce even the unprincipled to engage in a business of so much risk. Your memorialists beg it distinctly to be observed, however, that, in their view, a duty of twenty-five per cent. offers to the cupidity of smugglers three times the temptation that a duty of fifteen per cent. would do, and therefore do they deprecate, in the strongest terms, the imposition of heavy duties, as highly injurious to the revenue, to the equal rights of their fellow-citizens, and to the morals of the people. "Hitherto, frauds upon the revenue have been comparatively few, and smuggling has been repressed by the general sense of the mercantile community;" but, should a system be adopted which should hold out temptations to smuggling, what means can be found in the United States to repress the practice, especially when the laws imposing heavy duties shall become odious as the supposed instruments of oppression?

From a reference to the tariff now in existence, your memorialists find that all articles now manufactured within the United States, and which (so far as they are capable of judging) it is the present interest of the United States to manufacture, are already sufficiently encouraged by a protecting duty, as is indeed fully demonstrated by the effects thereof; as we now scarcely import any of the manufactures of leather, copper, lead, pewter, and tin generally, paper and stationary, hats, of wool or fur, carriages of any kind; all which articles are so amply protected by ad valorem duties, as nearly to have excluded altogether articles of a similar description from abroad. Many articles of our manufacture are still more amply protected under the head of specific duties, as now imposed, amongst which we enumerate:

Ale and beer, boots and shoes, brown and refined sugar, manufactures of tobacco, cables and cordage, hemp and sail cloth, candles and soap, cheese, chocolate, coal, lead, and shot, molasses, window glass, nails of all sorts, spirits of all sorts, &c. &c. the use of which from abroad has, within a few years past, been gradually giving place to articles of domestic growth or manufacture; and hence, amongst other causes, may be found the source of the present deficiency of the revenue from imports.

If it be desirable to encourage the manufactures of iron to the extent that is contended for by some, it might seem proper to repeal the duties on bar iron altogether, that the manufacturer might have it in his power to supply himself with the raw material best adapted to his purpose, at the cheapest rate, for it is well known that, for many purposes, the Swedish and Russia iron is indispensably necessary;

and from the heavy duties thereon imposed, the iron manufactories may be thereby subjected to an unequal competition; but, here the interest of the iron manufacturers, and the makers of iron within the United States, come in direct competition; and as the latter have as good a right to claim protection by duties on imports as any other class of manufacturers, and the revenue claims protection also, it does not appear as if it can be expedient to make any change in the duties thereon at present.

As the British government grants a bounty on the exportation of cut glass, of twenty-five shillings sterling per hundred pounds, besides allowing a drawback of the excise paid thereon, it may, perhaps, be proper to impose an augmentation of import duty thereon, the better to enable the manufacturers thereof to compete with the importers, and more especially as the enhancement of the price of this article will fall exclusively on the rich, and on them even not of necessity; it is, moreover, an article which cannot be smuggled, as, to obtain the bounty and drawback of excise in England, it must be cleared out of the custom houses there as *cut glass*.

Your memorialists, having suggested all such alterations in the revenue system as, in their opinion, can in any way serve to promote the interests of manufactures, without being vitally destructive to the interests of commerce and navigation, and at the same time most oppressively burthensome on the people, will *next* proceed to examine the justice and policy of the measure, so strongly advocated during the last session of Congress, as to have obtained a majority of the House of Representatives in their favor. In the first place, let us inquire into the claims of the manufacturers themselves, and why they are so clamorous for an increase of duties, when we find such an ample protection already afforded them. They say (we are told) they are suffering by the heavy importations of manufactured goods, and must be ruined if a check is not put thereto; whereas the truth is, that all classes of society are now suffering, and have yet much to suffer, from the many millions suddenly withdrawn from circulation, to enable the banks to resume specie payments, which, by lessening the value of all articles, operates most severely, and must prove, in a great degree, ruinous to all who are in debt; more especially to those who are so landed property, or improvements, as it has been very plainly demonstrated, by many recent attempts at sales, that property will, in very few cases, at this time, repay more than one third of the cost thereof. This is believed to be true of town property in general. As well, therefore, may all those who have been unfortunate in their speculations, go forward to Congress for relief, as the manufacturers! And what will be the consequence, if Congress shall be so partial as to relieve them in the manner they request? Why, the ruin of commerce must inevitably follow, together with navigation; and it will be vain to afford protection to *that noble manufacture*, the manufacture of a ship, if you deprive it of the means of employment! But the ruin of commerce and navigation is not all. To put money into

the hands of the manufacturers, to indemnify them for improvident speculations and bad bargains, and to enable them to repair their losses, agriculturists and all other classes of society, are to be compelled, by the prohibition of foreign goods, to purchase their goods at enhanced prices, and this, too, after such protecting duties had already been laid as the manufacturers had before declared would be sufficient for the purposes of protection and encouragement to them. Nor is this all; the revenue, already much impaired by the distressing state of the times, and still more by the sacrifices made for the support of manufactures, will be nearly annihilated, and those who have already been well fleeced to support the manufacturing interest, must anew be made to contribute, by direct taxes, to fill up the exhausted treasury for the support of government, and to pay the interest on the national debt, which it will be vain to expect to diminish till more auspicious times arrive, as in fact it will require all the economy of government, in these times, to prevent the increase thereof.

In the next place, let us inquire into the justice and policy of the prohibitory system, recommended by the advocates for internal manufactures, who may be viewed, indeed, less as the advocates of manufactures, than as the enemies to foreign commerce and navigation; for, to what other purpose can they have introduced the bills to repeal the drawbacks on exportation, and to abolish the credits given on duties, but to assail our commerce in the most vital manner and eventually to destroy it? For, it is plain, that, to repeal the drawbacks on exportation, is at once to cut off a very valuable branch of our foreign commerce, and with it a large portion of our carrying trade; and, also, to lessen the revenue, (there being retained on goods exported two and a half per cent of the amount of the duties imposed.) And to abolish the credits now given on duties, is materially to lessen the capital now employed in commerce, without at all serving the revenue, or aiding manufactures in the smallest degree; for, unless you prohibit the introduction of foreign goods altogether, a sufficiency will be imported for our own use, so long as we can pay for them, or until the manufactures can supply such goods on terms equally advantageous to the consumers. But, the evils which would result from the adoption of those measures are of no negative kind: by repealing drawbacks, our merchants, to guard against the losses which might be expected from redundant importations, would of course limit their imports to the quantity they might suppose necessary for the home demand, whence we should not unfrequently be exposed to suffer the evils which would arise from too scanty supplies. And, by repealing credits on duties, business would be thrown into fewer hands, viz: into the hands of the largest capitalists, to the great injury of many equally deserving and enterprising men. But what class of our manufactures will receive benefit from additional duties? Those only, who, not having exhausted their means in undertakings beyond their strength, yet retain a sufficiency of active capital; and these men stand in no need of legislative protection or assistance, but are already carrying on their business profitably, and now, that prices are

much reduced, with fairer prospects than ever. The time has passed away: Alas! It is now too late to attempt, by any legislative enactment, to come forward to the relief of many of our suffering fellow-citizens, manufacturers, and others, whose property, by the sudden and violent changes which have recently taken place, has become unequal to the payment of their debts. And is it just or reasonable, to annihilate commerce, to destroy the revenue, to press heavily on the agricultural interest, and on all classes of society, to benefit a small portion of our fellow-citizens, and those too who stand in no need of assistance, by measures which will avail nothing to those who stand in need of it? For we repeat, that the manufacturers, like all others who have lost their capital, or sunk it in useless purchases, are morally dead, and can only be restored to life and usefulness by a discharge from their debts. Whereas, those who have contained themselves within prudent bounds, are now carrying on their business under the most favorable prospects; though it may be admitted that many of them may have sustained losses by the sudden depreciation of the value of their goods, but in this way they have only suffered in common with all classes of mercantile men. But, it is avowed, by the framers of these measures, that they have not been led to recommend them from any narrow views, or partiality for the interests of the manufacturers. They tell us, in plain terms, that *their interest* was not a leading motive with them, and that it was of little importance in *their view*; they further tell us, that the nation can never be flourishing or independent, so long as it relies on foreign nations for any essential articles of support, and that the system which has entailed on us this dependence must be radically changed.

They tell us, that, as soon as the debts of the revolution were assumed by the new Congress, a system of excise and internal taxation was resorted to, as a permanent means of paying the interest of the national debt; that, during the administration of Gen. Washington and his immediate successor, an excise on spirits, snuff, and snuff-mills, duties on refined sugar, licenses to retailers, carriages, auctions, and a stamp act and land tax, were imposed, and that, in the preamble to the act for laying an impost, the encouragement of domestic manufactures was one of the avowed objects of the law; that this was the revenue system of the founders of our government, which they do not attack, but rest upon, as the only one on which the nation can rely.

Let us inquire into all this, and into the consistency of conduct of these avowed or pretended friends to the system adopted under Gen. Washington's administration.

We find, that that wise administration, though they were indeed the friends of domestic manufactures, were not the enemies of foreign commerce; they imposed merely such import duties as would give a reasonable encouragement to internal manufactures, without subjecting the consumers to pay for goods such exorbitant prices as must have been the consequence, for a considerable time at least, from prohibitory duties; and whilst they foresaw that an adequate amount of

revenue could not be expected from our foreign commerce alone, they did not shrink from imposing excise taxes to make good the deficit.

What does the argument amount to, that there is to be found in the preamble to the first act imposing an impost, a declaration that the encouragement of domestic manufactures was one of its avowed objects; when it may most justly be inferred, that the framers of that law never meant to sanction the imposition of excessive or prohibitory duties on commerce; as, notwithstanding their avowed friendship to internal manufactures, they immediately resorted to an excise on such of them as could best bear it? The truth is, that that enlightened administration, anxious to raise the public credit, then at a low ebb, and to support and maintain it, to encourage commerce and to promote internal industry of every kind to the utmost, imposed such burthens only as were necessary for these great ends, and, without looking to the most popular methods, resorted to the means most just and least onerous on the people.

Since that time the excise laws became odious to the people and have been repealed; the impost duties were, therefore, augmented, and the revenue arising therefrom was found to be amply sufficient for all the demands on the government, though the duties were considerably lower than the tariff now existing. When the war of 1812 broke out, it was found that our revenue from commerce could not be productive; it was then thought proper to double the duties, and to resort to direct taxes, excise laws, &c. On the return of peace, in 1815, such was the revenue on imports, from the double duties, and in 1816 and 17, from the new tariff, that it was considered unnecessary to continue longer in operation the odious laws imposing excise and direct taxes, and they were again accordingly repealed. In 1818 (imported goods having become very abundant,) our imports, and therewith our revenue, became diminished. Since then, the efforts to restore the circulating medium to a metallic standard have produced so general and universal a distress as still farther to diminish our imports, and thereby to lessen our revenue still more; not because goods have become plenty, but because consumers cannot afford to purchase, and merchants find it difficult to collect, so as to make the necessary remittances. In this state of things, the Secretary of the Treasury, when called on to state what will be the effect of imposing an augmentation to the import duties, replies, that smuggling will be the consequence, and that the revenue will be thereby diminished, and he has the common consent of the nation to this opinion, for the duties as they now stand, are nearly double the rates fixed previously to the war of 1812.

Notwithstanding a full view of all these things, the favorers of the restrictive system, blind or indifferent to the consequences that must follow the adoption of their measures, bring in a bill for the imposition of excessive or prohibitory import duties, and to support the revenue, now languishing, and which will be thereby ruined, what do they propose? Truly, nothing!

Here one is naturally led to pause and consider what can be pass-

ing in the minds of the authors of these measures! Can they contemplate the ruin of commerce and navigation, which have, for thirty years past, nearly alone, sustained the revenue, as nothing? Can they contemplate a large augmentation of the national debt, which for want of the revenue from commerce must inevitably follow, as nothing? Can they contemplate it as nothing to destroy a system of import, congenial to the feelings of a free people, and by means of which an ample revenue has hitherto been collected without a murmur, to make way for the introduction of an odious system of excise laws, which, if imposed without absolute necessity, can only be enforced, it is to be apprehended, by military authority? Can they contemplate it as nothing to throw out of employment your most deserving merchants, and to introduce in their stead *smugglers*, to furnish the necessary supplies of imported goods? For such must be the consequence, unless it is made highly penal in our citizens to purchase or use imported goods at all. Can they regard it as nothing to ruin the shipping interest and ship owners, and to throw out of employment a large portion of your most enterprising seamen, through whose means our naval prosperity and glory have been so highly advanced? Can they regard as nothing the immense sacrifices to be borne by the great body of the people, on this sudden change of things, which would infallibly greatly enhance the price of all foreign productions, at the same time that it would tend greatly to reduce the price of all our exports, *low as they now are*? For, who can be so blind or infatuated as to believe that when we declare we shall import nothing, that foreign nations will continue freely to receive our products, or indeed, that they will take any thing from us which they can procure elsewhere?

Will not Europe impose an extra duty on our cotton, our provisions, and all our most valuable staples? Perhaps, indeed, this state may retain some demand from abroad for her tobacco, as China receives our custom for her teas, which are raised no where else. This nation has advanced with most rapid strides, under a liberal and enlightened policy, to a pitch of greatness which has truly astonished the nations of the earth; and shall we now, for a momentary check in our prosperity, (which equally bears on other nations at this time,) abandon our high destiny and adopt a Chinese policy? Surely, gentlemen, in their zeal to promote independence, have forgotten that the great Author of nature has placed man in a state of dependance on his fellow men for the greatest comforts of life, and that the nation who shuts out all foreign intercourse, rejects civilization in the highest degree, and many of the chiefest bounties of Providence.

And for all the frightful sacrifices which are to follow on the introduction of the prohibitory system, what are we promised in exchange? Why, that manufactures and manufacturers shall prosper throughout the land, and that peace shall prevail! But, who can assure us that even the least of these blessings will ensue? Without a sudden introduction of an host of foreign manufacturers, it would take years before the people of this country will manufacture every thing for themselves; their genius, happily for them, being more devoted to agri-

culture, navigation, and other pursuits, better adapted to enlarge the mind and promote their happiness! And in the present state of things can it appear desirable to introduce into this country multitudes of the unhappy manufacturers of Europe?

Can it be supposed that these turbulent spirits, now inflamed to the highest degree, from the miseries they have long endured, and who are only restrained by a strong military force, from open violence, can all at once return to habits of industry, and become peaceable and inoffensive citizens? The experiment will at least be dangerous. But, in guarding against foreign war, by the prohibitory system, which will indeed prevent any collisions from commerce, who does not see, that, in place thereof, we are to incur the greater dangers of dissensions amongst ourselves and civil war! by arraying, from conflicting interests, the people of the north against the south, those of the east against the west—manufacturers against agriculturists. Give us cheap bread, cry the manufacturers, or we cannot work! Give us a certain fixed price for our grain, say the agriculturists, on the other hand, or we cannot purchase your manufactures and pay taxes, &c.

Surely we ought to profit by the lessons of experience, which every day declares, in the most legible characters, that a restrictive system is not suited to the condition of man. While the most enlightened legislators and statesmen of Europe are anxiously employed in devising means to throw off the shackles which a narrow and short-sighted policy had imposed, and which time, habit, and deep-rooted prejudices, have rivetted upon their people, shall we unnecessarily expose ourselves to the baneful influence of systems already exploded? Surely not. But, to relieve the difficulties under which we now labour, from an exhausted treasury, let a rigid and exact economy be introduced throughout every department of government, many things will bear curtailment, from the change in prices which most articles have undergone. At this time, let no new burthens be imposed; the people have already difficulties enough to cope with, and the government can now borrow money, if necessary, upon much better terms than individuals: therefore, let not their industry be paralyzed by any new exactions or sacrifices which may be avoided; and in a short time, it is to be hoped, and may reasonably be believed, by national economy, combined with individual industry and economy, that all the difficulties, introduced by the late great changes in the circulating medium, will, at least as to the great body of the people, entirely vanish and disappear, that commerce will revive, and that the finances of the nation, upon the present system, will soon be adequate to meet all demands on the government. Should this not be the case, it may then be wise to resort to direct taxes, or excises, on such articles as will best bear them, viz. spirits, sugars, &c. &c.

In a word, innovations are always dangerous, and no period could be selected less fitting for the making of experiments than the present.

It is believed, that the true interests of manufacturers themselves will be best promoted by a moderate protecting duty, because it may

safely be calculated on as permanent. A prohibitory system, in a free country like ours, could not long exist; and a repeal of the monopolizing system would involve in ruin all those who, relying thereon, had embarked in undertakings beyond their means, as has been evinced by the failure of those establishments, which were suddenly erected, on a scale of magnitude and expense, greater than the situation of their owners could support, or the state of the country demanded. It is believed, that manufactures will thrive fast enough, from increasing skill and capital, in every branch suited to the wants and means of the nation; in proof of which, we have the experience of the last thirty years, at the commencement of which, we scarcely manufactured any of the most common articles of clothing or furniture; whereas now, not only all the necessaries, but even most of the superfluities thereunto belonging, can readily be procured of domestic or internal manufacture.

And from the reflections that those views naturally excite, it appears evident to your memorialists, that, at no very distant day, so far from laying additional burthens upon commerce, it will become necessary to impose taxes upon articles of domestic growth or manufacture, as, in a country so extensive as the United States possess, with soil and climates so diversified, what may we not expect to produce, and what will be the consequence of taxing imports alone, both to the revenue and the people? For the sake of illustration, we shall select the article of *sugar*, of which there is already a considerable quantity produced within the United States, but not sufficient for the consumption of the nation. Suppose one hundred and fifty millions of pounds necessary for the consumption of the United States, and suppose one third thereof, now raised within their own territory; it will follow that the consumers now pay, in the duty thereon, three millions of dollars for the support of government, and one million and a half as bounty to the growers of sugar, within the United States. Suppose, in process of time, that the territory of the United States shall be able to furnish nine-tenths of the sugar wanted for home consumption; then the consumers will pay only four hundred and fifty thousand dollars thereon, towards the support of government, rating the consumption and the duty at the same as they now are, but they will pay four millions and fifty thousand dollars as bounty, to the raisers of sugar within our own territory; for, so long as importers can afford to pay the duty imposed, and can compete in our markets with the same article of domestic growth, so long does the duty serve as a bounty to the grower of the article, and to enhance the price in a similar degree to the consumer; for, it is evident, *but for the duty*, that importers could afford to sell sugar for three cents per pound less. Let us take one more view of this subject, and such as, we doubt not, will strictly apply to it ere many years pass around. Let us suppose that the United States, in place of not raising sugar enough for their own consumption, shall raise double the quantity. It will cease to be an article of revenue altogether; except through an excise; and what shall then regulate the price it will bear in our own markets? It is evident, if we raise, annually,

twice as much as we consume, the residue would soon constitute such a superfluity of stock, that the article would bring no price to reward the labourer for his toil, unless we can find a foreign market to take off this superfluity; it is therefore by the price which can be obtained abroad, for this superfluity, that the price of what is consumed at home will be regulated. This reasoning will apply to all articles we use, whether of import or export. The price at which the imported article can be sold will regulate the price of articles of a similar description of domestic growth or manufacture; and the price which can be obtained abroad, for articles of export, will regulate the price of what is thereof consumed at home.

By an open and free commerce, a nation is protected, on the one hand, against the danger arising from too scanty supplies, or combining monopolists; and, on the other, from the baneful consequences which would ensue on the want of a market for their surplus productions.

Your memorialists having laid before you this detailed view of the subject, in the fullest and best manner their very limited information and abilities have enabled them to do, respectfully beg leave to call your attention to the following resolutions, which were unanimously adopted at a meeting of their fellow-citizens:

“Whereas the manufacturing interests throughout the United States are already highly and amply protected by means of the impost duties; and whereas an augmentation of the present rates of impost, at the same time that it would tend to diminish the revenue, would greatly enhance to consumers the price of almost every article of necessary use:

“*Resolved*, That, to increase the present tariff of import duties is wholly unnecessary for the purpose of affording adequate protection to internal manufactures, will be highly destructive to the revenue, and, by affording strong temptations to smugglers, will have a tendency to impair the morals of the people.

“And whereas the introduction of a prohibitory system will prove ruinous to commerce and agriculture, and will be subversive of the best rights and interests of a most valuable portion of our fellow-citizens attached to navigation, and dependent on it for their support:

“*Resolved*, That we view the attempts made, during the last session of Congress, to increase the tariff, as unwise, impolitic, and unjust, and as tending, unnecessarily, and without any just cause or claim, to sacrifice the interests of the many to that of the few; and that we deprecate any successful renewal thereof as subversive of the dearest rights and liberties of a great majority of the citizens of the United States.”

Your memorialists now conclude, most respectfully soliciting the Congress of the United States to avert the evils which would arise from an increase of the tariff of duties, or from the introduction of any system calculated to be injurious to the rights of agriculture, commerce, and navigation.